

Commercial Block (Jones Drug Block, Tract #7701, 7702)  
Main Street, northwest corner of First  
Roscoe  
St. Clair County  
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1246

HABS,  
MO,  
93-ROSC,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. MO-1246

COMMERCIAL BLOCK  
(Jones Drug Block, Tract #7701,7702)

Location: Main Street, northwest corner of First, Roscoe,  
St. Clair County, Missouri.

USGS St. Clair Quadrangle, Universal Transverse  
Mercator Coordinates: 15.428900.4202245.

Present Owner: United States Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City  
District.

Present Use: Vacant.

Significance: This late nineteenth century commercial structure  
features cast iron storefronts, pressed metal cor-  
nices, and a pressed metal ceiling.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

According to a May 18, 1897, Osage Valley Eagle article, the southern three storefronts of this commercial building were built in 1897. The owners of the two southernmost storefronts were William Pence and his son Jonathan S. Pence, and the third storefront was owned by Dr. E.D. Miles. The contractor was J.W. Phillips of Jefferson City. The Roscoe Hotel occupied the first floor of the southernmost storefront, with the hotel rooms on the second floor of the first and second storefronts. The third storefront was intended to be leased to L.A. Simmons for a drug store, but the name above the cornice "Jones Drugs" indicates another occupant. The second floor of this storefront was intended for a doctor's and real estate offices. The fourth or northernmost storefront was constructed circa 1912. A bank was the occupant of the first level, with a Masonic Lodge on the second floor.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

## A. General Statement:

1. Condition of fabric: The buildings are only recently vacated and are in relatively good shape. The Masonic Lodge is still functioning and maintaining its space.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This two-story building has a nine-bay front, 71' wide, by 76' deep, plus a 22'-3" deep porch at the rear.
2. Foundation: Ashlar sandstone masonry load-bearing walls with partially excavated basements. The site slopes sharply toward the rear, and the basements are full height at the rear and excavated about half-way toward the front.
3. Wall construction: The walls are rough-faced ashlar sandstone quarried nearby, coursed on the front facade and randomly laid on the sides. The window and door trim and cast-iron storefronts are painted red.
4. Structural system, framing: There are masonry load-bearing walls around the exterior and on the interior running perpendicular to the street, dividing the building into four storefronts facing the street. Wood joists span the spaces bearing on masonry walls.
5. Porches: A two-story wooden porch at the rear serves the basement and first floor of the two southernmost storefronts. Wide wooden stairs at the center of the porch lead from ground level to the first floor. Wooden posts support the porch at the first floor and at the wooden roof which abuts the rear masonry wall of the building.
6. Chimneys: Flues for stoves rise through the masonry party walls.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: On the east elevation, front doors to the first floor commercial spaces are double doors with glass panels under glass transoms. The door openings are framed by cast-iron vertical members. The second door from the south is recessed in a bay formed by diagonally placed side walls. The rear doors are wood with a large glass panel above three horizontal rectangular panels. All doors at the rear are single-leaf doors except those second from the south corresponding to the storefront with the recessed bay, which are double doors. All doors have operable glass transoms. At the second floor of the front (east) facade, there are two doors opening onto wooden awnings. These single doors with transoms and segmentally arched lintels open off of a hallway that runs from the front to the rear of the second floor hotel housed in the original block.

- b. Windows: The storefront windows on the first floor of the east elevation are fully glazed from a low wooden spandrel panel at the bottom to the ceiling. The windows of the original portion are divided into six panes. The center storefront windows measure 11' high x 5' wide on either side of its recessed double door. The windows of the two flanking stores measure 11' high x 3'-6" wide on either side of their respective doors. The windows in the newer store at the north, larger sheets with only one horizontal division and no vertical divisions, measure 11' high x 6'-6" wide on either side of the door. All other windows on the first and second floors have one-over-one-light double hung wooden sashes with storm windows in aluminum frames. All of these window openings have segmentally arched lintels.
  8. Roof: The asphalt roof slopes from the front of the building toward the rear. There are parapets on the front, sides, and as party walls in the center of the roof, but not at the rear for water drainage. The cornice of the original southern block of three stores is a standardized pressed metal cornice divided by fifteen evenly spaced brackets. A row of dentils between these brackets runs above horizontal panels. Two large triangular panels sit on top of the cornice stabilized by a single metal rod running from the top of the triangle back toward the roof. The panel of the triangle on the north reads "Jones Drugs" the panel of the triangle on the right is missing. The cornice on the newer store to the north is also standardized pressed metal but of a different design than the original portion of the building. This cornice is divided into three sections by brackets and is terminated by decorated end members. A row of dentils runs between these brackets above two horizontal rectangular panels separated by a circle. The side wall parapets are capped by a coping formed by the slightly projecting top stone course.
- C. Description of Interior:
1. Floor plans: This building was built in two phases and consists of long narrow rectangular spaces separated by party walls. The two southern storefronts extend all the way to the rear of the site and terminate in a wooden porch across the rear. The third space from the south extends about half the length of other spaces. These three spaces, the original portion of the building, have partial basements under the rear half.
    - a. The southern storefront was the lobby of the hotel. Behind the lobby are two rectangular rooms, the second of which opens out onto a wooden porch. A toilet and a closet were

built in the rear corners of the second room. The hotel rooms on the second floor fill the entire width of the longer portion of the building. A corridor runs the entire length of the building from front to back and the hotel rooms open off of this corridor.

- b. The second storefront from the south, which is under the northern range of hotel rooms, is one large rectangular space.
- c. The third storefront is also one rectangular space, although a wooden storage balcony is built across the room at the rear. Access to the second floor over this smaller third space is by a stairway that opens directly to the sidewalk. At the second floor are two rooms.
- d. The northern storefront has an open space at the first level. The second level has small rooms in the northwest and southwest corners. The rest of the floor is one large rectangular room with raised platforms at either end and at the center of the south wall.

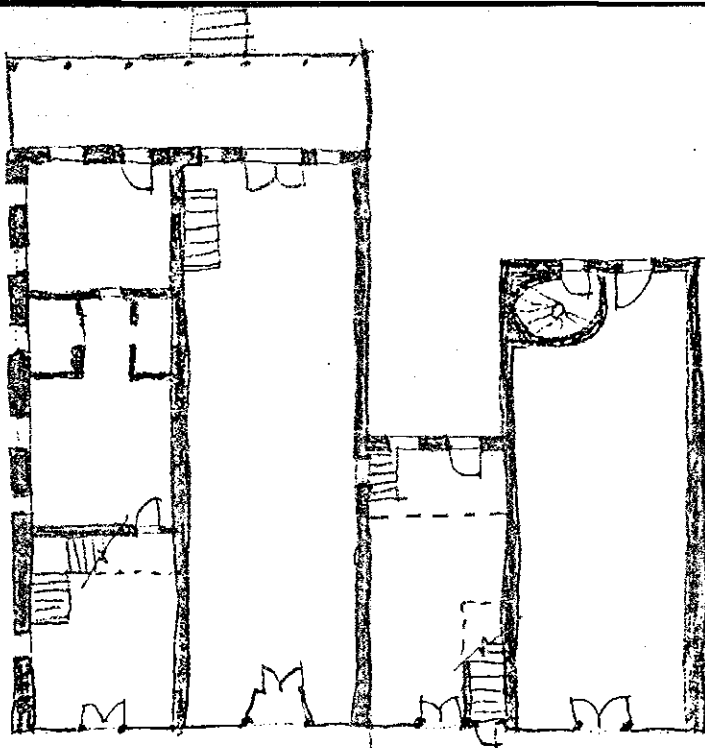
## 2. Stairways:

- a. The building has three stairs from the first to second floors, each serving separate enclosed sections of the second floor. The largest is located in the southernmost storefront of the original section. An L-shaped stair rises along the exterior wall to a landing, then turns 90° following an interior partition parallel to the front of the building. The stair arrives at the second floor at a point on a corridor which runs from the front to the rear of the building. This stair is open on its sides into the room below with a handrail set on a solid portion of wall finished in vertical ribbed wainscoting. The newel post has a stepped pyramidal cap.
- b. The second stairway is located at the northern edge of the original portion. Access is through a door opening directly onto the sidewalk. The stairway is enclosed on the north side by the original exterior masonry wall of the building, and on its south side by an interior partition. This partition begins at the stair and runs to the ceiling of the second floor, enclosing the stair but leaving open space below the stair on the first floor.
- c. The third stairway is located in the southwest corner of the newer portion of the building. Access is from a door at the rear. The stair is a circular winding stair, completely

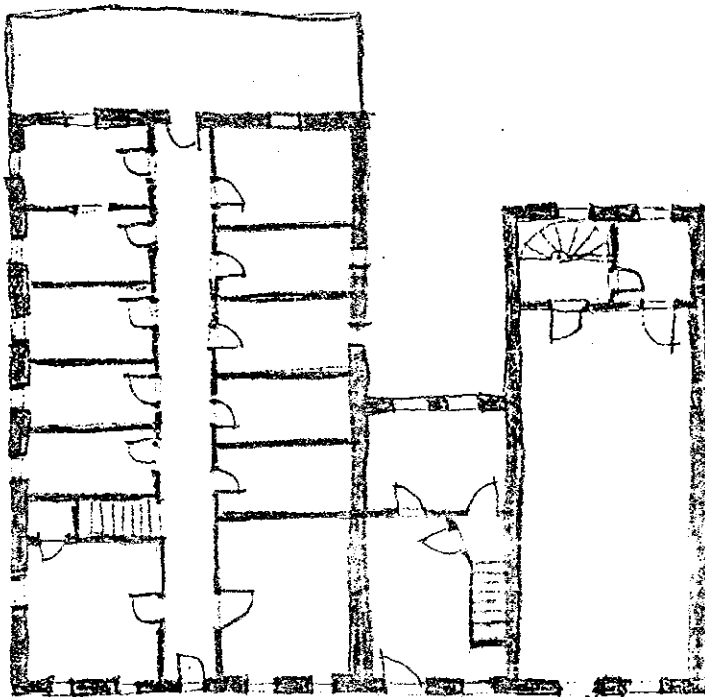
enclosed by side walls. The enclosing partition at the first floor curves, following the contours of the stair.

- d. In addition, there are two stairways to the basement, each located in the southwest corners of the middle and northernmost stores in the original block. Both stairs are reached by lifting a hatch in the floor and are very steep.
  3. Flooring: There is wooden tongue-and-groove flooring everywhere except in the first floor of the northern storefront where the floor is concrete.
  4. Wall and ceiling finish: There is plaster over masonry load-bearing walls, and on wood lath on interior partitions. Vertical ribbed wooden wainscoting lines the front room of the southern storefront. The ceilings of the three southern storefronts have wood tongue-and-groove stripping, with plaster ceilings upstairs throughout. The ceiling of the northern storefront is pressed metal divided into eleven panels. The twelfth panel at the southwest corner is covered by the partition enclosing the circular stair. The two panels in the third row back from the front are longer than the others to accommodate tellers' windows and a vault on the south side of the room. There is no decoration in the panel on that side. The center of each panel is filled by a great wheel with eight spokes which curve downward slightly to a hub several inches below the ceiling. Around this circle is a border of corner squares and intervening rectangles. The squares are filled with quatrefoil motifs, and the rectangles have long ovals ending in pointed arches flanked at either end by more quatrefoils. All available surface is filled either by foliate ornament or by a stippled texture.
  5. Openings:
    - a. Doorways and doors: Door frames in the second floor hallway in the original portion have lintels which extend slightly beyond the edge of the vertical members. The doors have four vertical rectangular panels with operable glass transoms. The doorframes in the second floor of the northern store have lintels with cyma recta moldings. These doors are also four panel with operable transoms.
- D. Site: The building faces east on Main Street.

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→ N FIRST FLOOR PLAN JONES DRUG BLOCK #7701/7702



→ N SECOND FLOOR PLAN JONES DRUG BLOCK #7701/7702

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Project Supervisor  
Historic American  
Buildings Survey  
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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Truman Reservoir Project was funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District, in compliance with Executive Order 11593 as a mitigative effort in the construction of the Harry S Truman Dam and Reservoir, in the summer of 1977. William Brookover (Columbia University), supervisor; Michael Connor (University of Virginia), team foreman; Gary Baker (Catholic University), Edwin Daniel (Mississippi State), and Gary Statkus (University of Illinois), student architects; Paul Weed (Columbia University), architectural historian.